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cation of any paper been looked forward to with so much curiosity and expectation. At last, the truth was to be revealed. For months and months charges and epithets had been bandied to and fro, until the generality had ceased to credit anything; but here facts were promised, and now the world would know. And it did know. On the 20th, the day announced, part of the accounts were published, in prominent type and position. They were continued in successive issues until the 29th, when a grand exhibit was made in a supplement printed in German as well as English, and filling in all twenty-eight columns of the "Times." The figures required no explanation. They told their own story,—a story the significance of which was clear to the meanest intelligence. Millions of public money had been squandered, without any resulting benefit to the public; millions had been stolen, and by whom was now apparent. Nast's graphic pencil had already made the dwellers in every nook and corner of the land familiar with the features and bearing of the now detected thieves.

CHARLES F. WINGATE.

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- ART. V.—1. *Studies in the History of the Renaissance.* By WALTER H. PATER, Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford. London: Macmillan & Co. 1873.
2. *De l'Art Chrétien.* Par A. F. RIO. Nouvelle édition. Paris: L. Hachette; Fribourg-en-Brisgau: M. B. Herder. 1870.
3. *Cultur der Renaissance in Italien.* JACOB BURCKHARDT. Leipzig: E. A. Seeman. 1869.

THESE are the titles of three books which present the same subject, but with totally different results as to the impression produced upon the reader. One of them puts it before us as if it were the only good way, yet too good for most people; another, in a spirit of hostility and detraction; the third, with an excellent breadth of fairness and judicious appreciation. As the authors all three come forward with high pretensions to qualification as instructors, it may be worth while to inquire somewhat at length into the intrinsic value of their instructions, as well as into their method of treating the theme which they have chosen.

Since Mr. Ruskin set the example of a literary man erecting himself into a dictator on questions of art, we have been subjected to fearful tyranny in æsthetics. It is true that no one else has carried matters so far nor with so high a hand, but there are innumerable petty despots laying down the laws of the sublime and beautiful, who only lack the ability to be as peremptory, as arbitrary, and as paradoxical as he. A ready pen is a sad snare; he who wields it wishes to write upon every subject, whether he knows anything about it or not. Even with the French, who possess the birthright of natural appreciation in regard to art and taste, who have excellent traditions and the Louvre as a training school, — even with them the *littérateur* sometimes overtops the *connoisseur*, when a man of letters undertakes art-criticism. But general culture so inevitably develops the æsthetic faculty in a Frenchman, that he is in no danger of wandering far out of the way, still less of leading others astray; he has a nation of critics to bring him to his bearings. Moreover, no Frenchman would venture to enforce his assertions with no other authority than, “You must believe what I tell you because I tell you so,” and he would only be laughed at if he did; there are no autocrats of criticism in France, no critics by divine right. But with us poor barbarians, American and English, it is otherwise. Few of us have this inborn perception of beauty and fitness which belong to the Latin races; and when a man appears possessing the precious gift, should he arrogate supernatural powers to himself, he will not find many to deny his authority or dispute his claim. On the contrary, his wildest and weakest words will be received as inspired, and reverentially quoted by his followers until the mischief spreads and we have a new sect of fanatics ready to proceed to extremes with unbelievers. We think we recognize in Mr. Pater, whose work heads this article, one of the new Mahomets, although he has not yet bared his scimitar and proclaimed himself monarch as well as prophet. He lacks two capital qualifications for such a mission, — originality and earnestness; yet he has already votaries, and, seeking for the secret of his influence, we are inclined to think that it lies primarily in the subjects of which he treats, names and themes which are incantations in themselves, whose very

sound possesses a magic which nothing can dispel ; secondly, in his treatment of them, and this is a snare. He has the peculiar eloquence which goes with insobriety of style, and all the charm and force which can be snatched by breaking rules. Still, the effects of this lawlessness are by no means always happy. The spell would also be more potent for many readers, if the author were not so palpably intoxicated by it himself ; sometimes his ear seems to be tickled by a single word, which he repeats in every imaginable combination ; thus we have “comely clerks,” “comely decadence,” “comely gestures,” “comely divinities,” “comely ways of conceiving life” ; then it is “sweetness,” *ad nauseam* ; sometimes a whole phrase repeated verbatim, like the burden of a ballad. Now this trick of iteration may be pardoned in an old gentleman like Mr. Carlyle, but it certainly suggests dotage. He coins like a true despot, and uses words without italics which are not English, such as “*débris*” and “*cult*,” — to whatever language that may belong, — and gives us such parts of speech as “siderealized.” And why does he talk about Pico della Mirandula, whom all modern Europe knows as Mirandola ? This is mere affectation ; but when he speaks of the Pitti Palace and the Sistine Chapel as “the Pitti” and “the Sistine,” it is a bad habit, and has a taint of vulgarity. A graver fault than these is his inaccuracy ; for instance, in support of a theory he alleges that the Greek goddesses were always childless ; he cannot be ignorant of the beautiful Juno suckling a babe in the Pio Clementino Museum of the Vatican, not to speak of the common subject of Venus and Cupid. Elsewhere there is a trifling detail which strongly marks his preference for effect over exactness ; he gives a minute and poetical description of Raphael’s great frescos known as the Debate on the Sacrament and Parnassus, speaking of them as companion pieces designed to illustrate respectively orthodoxy of doctrine and orthodoxy of taste. Now these compositions are in no sense whatever companions ; they differ in shape, size, and position ; if the *Disputa* have a companion, it is the famous School of Athens.

To pass to the more agreeable task of pointing out merits, Mr. Pater has a most unusual gift of conveying half-defined

emotions, modulations of feeling, shades of thought ; rare fineness of perception, and aerial grace and delicacy of touch ; an exquisite felicity of epithet, of description, of presenting lovely images to the mind ; his prose is sometimes as fraught with the unspeakable as music itself, although never with the highest rapture ; in these twin talents of calling up the seen and the unseen must lie much of his fascination. A more tangible quality, though one seldom brought into service, is his power of giving to his theories — and some few of those about art are perfectly sound — the clearness of chiselled marble. It is true that they are mainly borrowed, but he makes good use of them occasionally. An example of this is his remarks on the proper limits of sculpture (p. 188), or a still finer passage concerning the influence of external conditions on religion (p. 171) : “ Greek art, when we first catch sight of it, is entangled with Greek religion. We are accustomed to think of Greek religion as the religion of art and beauty, the religion of which the Olympian Zeus and the Athena Pallas are the idols, the poems of Homer the sacred books. . . . Yet such a view is only a partial one ; in it the eye is fixed on the sharp, bright edge of high Hellenic culture, but loses sight of the sombre world across which it strikes. . . . Religions, as they grow by natural laws out of man’s life, are modified by whatever modifies his life. They brighten under a bright sky, they become liberal as the social range widens, they grow intense and shrill in the clefts of human life where the spirit is narrow and confined, and the stars are visible at noonday ; and a fine analysis of these differences is one of the gravest functions of religious criticism.”

Having called attention to these beauties, of which the above are by no means the only examples, there is no help for it but to go back to fault-finding. The volume is a collection of essays chiefly on matters of art in one form or another. It is curious that having much of the dogmatism, inaccuracy, fancifulness, love of paradox, and arbitrariness of Ruskin, Mr. Pater’s purpose should be the glorification of that period or movement, as one may consider it, which has called forth the former’s most eloquent denunciations. Movement we must say, since our author removes the landmarks and limits of his

subject so completely as to leave no means of bounding it. Thus we have a quarrel with him at the outset, for we deny the right to wrest a term of long-established and universally accepted significance from its conventional meaning and give it a wider, perhaps a broader, but at the same time a looser and less accurate application, so that it ceases to be the aid that all such general terms are meant to be. The word Renaissance has been used technically to express an epoch, a fact, an intellectual phase, and a social condition. To use it as Mr. Pater does is as though a writer on ecclesiastical history should persist in including in the term Reformation the Albigenses, Waldenses, iconoclast emperors, or whatever resistance to hierarchical authority has arisen in Christendom from apostolic days down; or as though the historian of England should begin the Revolution with the meeting at Runnymede, or the downfall of Ethelred the Unready. The review of this movement leads Mr. Pater to touch upon some of the gravest pre-occupations of the human mind; he always does so with the air of one who is trifling with his subject; there is no earnestness in his manner; he never goes to the root of the question, he never sounds the soul of the inquirer; he talks about "religions," but he knows nothing of religion; fallacies bloom about his path; he never forgets that he is a *dilettante*; he shrinks from no assertion however unfounded, and has no hesitation in contradicting himself a few pages later. In his preface he says that, to the critic, "all periods, types, schools of taste, are in themselves equal. . . . 'The ages are all equal,' says William Blake, 'but genius is always above its age.'" This is very well for Blake, the *pictor ignotus*; but the ages have been notoriously unequal, or why do we hear of the age of Pericles, the Augustan age, the *Cinquecento*, the Elizabethan era, the *Grand Siècle*? And genius is not above its age, but above its fellow-men, for to the heirs of immortal fame posterity has seldom done more than confirm the verdict of their own century. And are we to believe that Mr. Pater really esteems the school of taste which produced Mansard and Le-mercier equal to that which brought forth Arnolfo and the Pisani? His definition of the critic's function, to discern and detach from the mass of an author's works the pure ore, the

fine crystals of his genius, which make its intrinsic and distinctive value, is true and well put ; but what are we to think of his own critical capacity when in that very passage he classes Byron with Goethe as artist or workman ?

The first example given of that revival of classic feeling which common consent has assigned to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, but which Mr. Pater wishes to trace back to the dark ages, is a poetical story in Provençal of the latter half of the thirteenth century, or even later ; there is no proof extant of an older derivation, and at that time Dante had come, besides the constellation of lesser lights who preceded him, whom Mr. D. G. Rossetti has made known to us. This date is the fact ; the shadowy possibilities of an earlier origin are not sufficient to make this story serve as proof of a return towards Hellenism in the eleventh century ; moreover those very possibilities indicate, not a Greek, but an Arabic source. Mr. Pater gives no complete or consecutive account of this tale or the literature of which it is a sample ; we are not told the story ; the selections are few and scanty, though so full of beauty, grace, and quaintness as to make us long for more ; his method throughout is like humming bits of a tune to one's self. Reduce chapter first to its substance and what remains is about this : that in a certain book there is a story which Mr. Pater thinks very pretty, and which confirms, to his mind, certain notions of his own. For a clear conception of either the story or the subject which it illustrates we must look for it in M. Fauriel's *History of Provençal Poetry*.

From the thirteenth century Mr. Pater leaps lightly into the fifteenth, where his first point is : " The attempt made by certain Italian scholars to reconcile Christianity with the religion of ancient Greece." It may be doubted whether they did so seriously and in good faith. The men who carried the parallel furthest really cared for myth more than for truth ; the best Christians among the humanists did not bother themselves with such amalgamation, but kept their religion and their philosophy in different phials. Pico della Mirandola, whom Mr. Pater selects as the type of these experimentalists, was of an earnest and ardent nature, and less interested in any one form of human belief than in a general scheme which should

include all that men had known and learned,—the science and wisdom of the obsolete scholiasts, of the Arabic and Jewish teachers, as well as of the heathen sages. The impression left by Mr. Pater's description of Pico, a youth of the most extraordinary endowments and erudition even in that age of prodigies, is of something between a wax-figure and a sleep-walker; a single sentence of his own gives us at once more sense of reality and a more ideal conception of him: “‘In the midst of the world have I placed thee,’ says the Creator, ‘that thou mayest the better survey it and all that it contains. I have made thee a creature neither all heavenly nor all earthly, neither purely immortal nor mortal, that thou mayest shape and subdue thyself unhindered; thou canst degrade thyself to a beast and regenerate thyself to a godlike being. The brutes bring with them from the womb what is to be theirs; the higher spirits are from the beginning what they are to remain throughout eternity. Thou alone hast development, a power of voluntary growth; thou hast within thee the germs of universal life.’”

“The fifteenth century was an impassioned age,” proceeds Mr. Pater, “so ardent and serious in its pursuit of art that it consecrated everything with which art had to do, as a religious object. . . . It was too serious to play with a religion.” This is far from true; it better describes the general temper of the previous century; there was an intense and impassioned strain in the fifteenth which found expression in many ways, but the age was willing to play with its own religion in architecture, in painting, in literary academies, in actual life. It was no age of shams, yet a tinge of artifice had become apparent long before it drew to a close. In the latter half of this century, according to M. Rio, letters and the arts had begun to decline and degenerate in Florence, yet there were still some chosen spirits who understood the ideal aspirations of their predecessors and were found worthy to continue the unfinished work of Fra Angelico in the Vatican. With them were associated the leaders of the Umbrian school,—that school, to quote the same orthodox authority, which was imbued with the purest traditions, brought up under the shadow of the sanctuary at Assisi, rich in the frescos of Cimabue



and Giotto, where the painters elevated their genius by the contact of popular piety and monastic fervor. At the head of this band was Sandro Botticelli. Of this master's tendencies, Mr. Pater gives us the following metaphysical summary: "What Dante scorns as alike unworthy of heaven and hell, Botticelli accepts, — that middle world in which men take no side in great conflicts, and decide no great causes, and make no great refusals. . . . The peculiar character of Botticelli is the result of a blending in him of a sympathy for humanity in its uncertain condition, its attractiveness, its investiture at rarer moments in a character of loveliness and energy, with his consciousness of the shadow upon it, of the great things from which it shrinks, and this conveys into his work somewhat more than painting usually attains of the complexion of humanity" (pp. 45, 49, 50). Then follow descriptions of several of his most noted pictures, in which we are told of the "peevish-looking Madonnas," who wish they had been let alone in their humble homes among the gypsy brood who are their true children. It is impossible to argue such a subject by pitting description against description; but let any one who has seen and studied them recall the circular picture of the Uffizi where the child guides the mother's pen, and that in the Louvre where he lays his little hand against her face with unutterable love and compassion, yet with a natural baby action which every mother knows, and let them decide whether Mr. Pater has not gone very far out of his way to find a meaning for Botticelli's painting which is foreign to it. There is indeed a faltering, a fainting in his Madonnas, as if the burden laid upon them were too heavy to bear, the cup too bitter to drink, but they are sweetness and weakness personified; not their trouble, but their comfort is the caress of the babe whose tender childish sympathy is blended with the sustaining calm of divine foreknowledge. Botticelli's Madonnas may not be reciting the *Magnificat* or the *Gaude, Maria*, but they are ready to say with drooping head, "Ecce ancilla Domini; be it unto me according to thy word." He possesses to a singular degree the gift granted to the real masters of that day of making us feel their own personal and peculiar sentiment regarding a subject, however conventional the treatment or crude the exe-

cution, so that it affects us as it affected them. Mr. Pater analyzes it well in speaking of Luca della Robbia: "His work possessed in an extreme degree that peculiar characteristic, . . . the impress of a personal quality, a profound expressiveness, what the French call *intimité*, by which is meant a subtler sense of originality, the seal on a man's work of what is most inward and peculiar in his moods and manner of apprehension; it is what we call expression carried to its highest intensity of degree" (pp. 60, 61).

Before we reach the essay on Michael Angelo's poetry which forms one of Mr. Pater's studies, we have met (p. 57) with the statement that the unfinished condition of many of Michael Angelo's greatest statues was "his way of etherealizing pure form," that "this incompleteness is Michael Angelo's equivalent for color in sculpture." If the author's object be to astonish us by this paradox, we are certainly astonished, but such a mode of producing effect is too much akin to that of a child who hides to jump out and cry "Booh!" After we have once been startled in this way the trick fails, and we laugh or shrug our shoulders. Even those who have never seen the original statues can judge of the value of the interpretation when they learn that the only unfinished portion of the David is a very small bit among the locks of the hair, and in the Dawn, the toes of one foot. Our next surprise is the ascription of "sweetness" to Michael Angelo as an essential element of his ascendancy. Most people would, indeed, be "puzzled" (p. 63) if asked to define wherein that sweetness resides, and equally so to point it out in Victor Hugo, to whom Mr. Pater compares Michael Angelo in this particular; the instance chosen to illustrate it in the former, of the butterfly alighting on the blood-stained barricade being merely a Frenchman's theatrical delight in violent contrasts. Of Michael Angelo's *tenderness*, the deep well whence flows all that softens his severity and makes his tremendous sublimity tolerable to weaker humanity, we hear not a word. Nor of those strange spheres, unvisited by any other mortal, where he dwelt apart among the grand beings whom he has depicted, — that mighty world with its mighty race, Titans, or demi-gods, or stupendous avatars, incorporations of great primordial and moral

forces, standing, reposing, or stalking about in their own immensurate realm.

Mr. Pater closes his chapter on Michael Angelo with a sort of monody on the Medicean chapel, where are the tombs of Lorenzo and Giuliano with their slumberous guardians. "The titles assigned traditionally to the four symbolical figures, 'Night and Day,' 'the Twilight and the Dawn,' are far too definite for them; they come much nearer to the mind and spirit of their author, and are a more direct expression of his thoughts than any merely symbolical conceptions could possibly be. They concentrate and express, less by way of definite conceptions than by the touches, the promptings of a piece of music, all those vague fancies, misgivings, presentiments which shift and mix and define themselves and fade again, whenever the thoughts try to fix themselves with sincerity on the conditions and surroundings of the disembodied spirit. . . . It is a place neither of terrible nor consoling thoughts, but of vague and wistful speculation. Here again Michael Angelo is the disciple not so much of Dante as of the Platonists. . . . And of all that range of sentiment he is the poet, a poet still alive and in possession of our inmost thoughts,—dumb inquiry, the relapse after death into the formlessness which preceded life, change, revolt from that change, then the correcting, hallowing, consoling rush of pity; at last, far off, thin and vague, yet not more vague than the most definite thoughts men have had through three centuries on a matter that has been so near their hearts,—the new body; a passing light, a mere intangible, external effect on those too rigid or too formless faces; a dream that lingers a moment, retreating in the dawn, incomplete, aimless, helpless; a thing with faint hearing, faint memory, faint power of touch; a breath, a flame in the doorway, a feather in the wind." He who can stand in the silent precincts of those awful presences, those solemn genii of the mysterious borderland between Life and Death, the Known and the Unknown, talking of them as if they were airy sylphs or shapeless phantasms, however full of fancy he may be, lacks imagination, enthusiasm, feeling for the power and magnitude of what is real, wholly lacks the capacity to lose himself in the genius even of the greatest.

The essay upon Leonardo da Vinci is far above any which precedes it, because the subject legitimately affords scope for speculation and paradox. The most general and ordinary reading of it must needs abound in guesses and half-expressed meanings, and Mr. Pater's fantastic pen finds here fit material for exquisite elaboration and overlaying with mystical embroidery. If the way to perfection be "through a series of disgusts" (p. 95), one may fancy that at one period of Leonardo's career every picture was a step on the road, such repulsion lurks within the subtle inscrutability of his faces; they may stimulate the curiosity, but while we wonder whether this enigmatical personage, here called St. John the Baptist, there Bacchus, anon the Madonna, again Herodias's daughter, be man or woman, faun or human, angel or demon, we feel that to understand might be to loathe. When Mr. Pater has said that it is "by a certain mystery in his work, and something enigmatical beyond the usual measure of great men, that he fascinates, or perhaps half repels"; that "his type of beauty is so exotic that it fascinates a larger number than it delights, and seems more than that of any other artist to reflect ideas and views and some scheme of the world within"; that by the study of Nature and her occult relations "he learned the art of going deep, of tracking the sources of expression to their subtlest retreats"; and — by way of summing up — "curiosity and the desire of beauty, — these are the two elementary forces in Leonardo's genius"; he has perhaps given us as distinct a conception of Leonardo's genius as words alone can convey. Yet some common-place and common-sense might have been useful in the analysis even of this subject. We should not have had Mr. Pater's eloquent lucubrations about Monna Lisa, for instance; and why does he feel compelled to translate this accepted title and call her Lady Lisa? But neither should we have had such an opinion as he gives of the Last Supper, by which Leonardo is most widely known, — that immortal work of which some common reproduction is the treasure of many a humble home, where the painter's name is a household word with simple souls who never heard of La Gioconda; that work whose power and pathos and living truth have triumphed over anachronisms in treatment, the ravages of accident, the falsi-

fications of restorers, fixing, as our author himself says, the type of Christ for all succeeding generations. "Vasari pretends that the central head was never finished; but finished or unfinished, or owing part of its effect to a mellowing decay, this central head does but consummate the sentiment of the whole company,—ghosts through which you see the wall, faint as the shadows of leaves upon the wall on autumn afternoons, this figure is but the faintest, most spectral of them all. It is the image of what the history it symbolizes has been more and more ever since, paler and paler as it recedes from us. Criticism came with its appeal from mystical unrealities to originals, and restored no life-like reality but these transparent shadows, spirits which have not flesh and bones." This is all that Mr. Pater finds to say of that work which has made real to us Christ in his most human aspect; of that act which still, after nearly two thousand years, whenever it is commemorated has the power to move us to our inmost soul, and draw tears of tenderness from the purest springs of feeling, as for one long lost but ever beloved; the sole act which for all time to come established a bond of earthly fellowship between the Saviour and mankind; which can bring all unborn generations during the brief rite as near their Friend and Master as those who walked with him daily upon earth. In fine, had Mr. Pater been more occupied with his subject than himself, he would have given us, instead of *silhouettes* on cobwebs, a vivid, full-face portrait of Leonardo's personality, about which there is no mystery or secret,—daring rider, graceful dancer, sweet singer, skilful engineer, peerless painter, chemist, caricaturist, mechanic, poet, courtier, handsomest of human beings, the most concrete and consummate illustration of that many-sided and glowing fifteenth century about which Mr. Pater seems bent on weaving veils of mist and moonlight.

The notice of Joachim du Belley is in one way the best chapter in the book, giving the author opportunity for his dainty and delicate fingering, his light strokes of metaphor and suggestion, the short, airy, discursive flights, which he loves, and from which he alights for a moment on cathedral-spires, palace-pinnacles, and tree-tops, on the horizon of his subject, often just at the vanishing-point. But if one wishes for the

gist rather than the pollen-dust of the matter, it is given by Ste. Beuve in the last volume of his *Nouveaux Lundis*.

Of the peculiar metaphysical and ethical views of which Mr. Pater occasionally gives us glimpses, we have yet said nothing. He stands aloof, in an attitude of superfine separateness, whence he critically and dispassionately surveys the world of morals. The most striking instance of this is his way of looking at Winckelman's apostasy, confessedly the result of interested motives; he considers it the consistent act of a man who is true to the key-note of his nature, who obeys his highest instinct, which, in Winckelman was the artistic. We admit that frequent and careful reading has still left us in doubt as to Mr. Pater's meaning in certain passages, and we shrink from incurring the charge of stupidity, which we ourselves have sometimes sharply brought against critics who cannot discriminate between an author's real opinions and his temporary assumption of the opinions of others. But throughout this last essay, and the conclusion, Mr. Pater lays himself open to the charge of being a heathen, or of trying to be one; for no Englishman of the present day can become a genuine heathen, any more than he could become a Jew or a Mussulman; even Mr. Swinburne has only succeeded in being godless. Page 181 he writes as follows: "The temper of the antique world . . . has passed away with that distant age, and we may venture to dwell upon it. . . . Gymnastic originated as part of a religious ritual. The worshipper was to recommend himself to the gods by becoming fleet, and serpentine, and white, and red, like them. The beauty of the palæstra and the beauty of the artist's studio reacted on each other. The youth tried to rival his gods, and his increased beauty passed back into them. *Ὁμνυμι πάντας θεοὺς μὴ ἐλέσθαι ἂν τὴν βασιλέως ἀρχὴν αὐτῷ τοῦ καλοῦ εἶναι.* That is the form in which one age of the world chose 'the better part,' — a perfect world, if our gods could have seemed forever only fleet and serpentine, and white and red. . . . Let us not say, would that the unperplexed youth of humanity, seeing itself and satisfied, had never passed into a mournful maturity; for already the deep joy was in store for the spirit of finding the ideal of that youth still red with life in its grave." We can extract no meaning

from all this, except that the only compensation Christianity has given mankind for Greek paganism is in that the resurrection of the body immortalizes materialism. "The form in which one age of the world chose 'the better part,' " — does he really mean that men may choose "the better part" in any form which seems good to themselves? Is there no such thing as calling the worse the better, and that bread which satisfieth not? What became of the uncomely and unlovely ones in such a world as this? Where was the comfort of the feeble and the deformed, — "the disgraced," as the beauty-loving Italians call them still, — of the unsuccessful, the unhappy? They were not pointed to one whose visage was so marred more than any man; *that* earth was an earth for the beautiful and the beloved, but not for others, and there was no different heaven for them to raise their eyes to. He says that "the mystical art of the Christian middle age is always struggling to express thoughts beyond itself"; and in this respect compares Fra Angelico's Coronation of the Virgin with "the many-headed gods of the East, the orientalized Ephesian Diana with its numerous breasts, . . . overcharged symbols, a means of hinting at an idea which art cannot adequately express, which still remains in the world of shadows." So the best that mediæval genius and piety have produced is to be likened to the monstrous idols of barbarous nations! "Such forms of art are inadequate to the matter they clothe; they remain ever below its level." Ay, but how do they lift the soul and intellect to regions which cannot be expressed? *there* is the key to the language which cannot be translated into common speech; *there* dwell the truths which can only be shown in types, — but that language is not a whisper, those truths are not shadows. "The broad characteristic of all religions, as they exist for the greatest number, is a universal pagan sentiment, a paganism . . . which has lingered far onward into the Christian world, ineradicable, because its seed is an element of the very soil out of which it springs. This pagan sentiment measures the sadness with which the human mind is filled whenever its thoughts wander far from what is here and now. . . . It is with a rush of homesickness that the thought of death presents itself. He would remain at home forever on earth if he could.

. . . . Such sentiment is the eternal stock of all religions modified, indeed, by changes of time and place, but indestructible, because its root is so deep in the earth of man's nature. The breath of religious initiators passes over them; a few 'rise up with wings, as eagles,' but the broad level of religious life is not permanently changed. Religious progress, like all purely spiritual progress, is confined to a few." Could this assertion be proclaimed to the world in intelligible terms, hundreds of thousands of fervent voices would deny it from the profoundest recesses of their soul. It is not the prescience of homesickness for this groaning earth, this travailing creation, which makes life sombre and sad; it is the sense of exile, the intimations of a former and a future state to which we truly belong; the dim consciousness of a task to be done, a race to be run, a fight to be fought, a term to be fulfilled, a probation to be endured, which is at once the bane and the balm of mortal existence. It is towards this better country that all Christendom is yearning, is tending; it is the voice of this yearning which finds utterance in such hymns as, "Jerusalem the golden," and "I would not live away," for multitudes who cannot clothe their aspirations in words of their own. And all this is so old, — so old, — that it seems strange there should be need to say it again; but old as it is, it is not worn out, for it is true. Mr. Pater goes on elaborating rather than expanding his idea, talking about the "pagan sentiment," and the "pagan sadness," and the forms they have taken in various European countries, ignoring the trite fact that just where religion has retained most of the old heathen element in creed and ceremonial, is where the material, the finite prevails, and where men are most gay and childlike; while it is where the level of religious life *has* been changed and raised, that the seriousness, the sadness, if he will, is to be found, because the sense of banishment, the longing for the real home is deeper; but there, too, is the serener and the loftier cheer. When he styles the Roman Catholic ritual a "sad mechanic exercise," one is almost irritated by his perversity and love of paradox. Yet, notwithstanding the evident contradiction, he will have it that whatever of calm or joyousness was left in the religious life of Christendom was a remnant of paganism or a revival of art.



“Even in the worship of sorrow the native blitheness of art asserted itself” (p. 199). Why not acknowledge that, to the exalted religious perception, the eternal sun becomes visible behind the clouds, that the clear shining of the perfect day transfuses the mists of earth? He insists on the “*grayness* of the ideal or spiritual world,” as compared with the rich colors of the sensuous; he has never lifted his eyes to the sun-illuminated blue of the purest ideal, the highest spiritual life, nor beheld the snowy ranges of sublimest abstract thought and principle flushed with the warm feelings of humanity and benevolence, fiery with patriotism, with the martyr-spirit, with all intense enthusiasms; he has not rejoiced in the rainbow tints of hope, the glow of faith, the deep-hued ardor of adoration.

Once more let him speak for himself (p. 210): “The service of philosophy, and of religion and culture as well, to the human spirit, is to startle it into a sharp and eager observation. Every moment some form grows perfect in hand and face; some tone on the hills or sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, — for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated, dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How can we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy?”

“To burn always with this hard, gem-like flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life. Failure is to form habits; for habit is relative to a stereotyped world; meantime it is only the roughness of the eye that makes any two persons, things, situations, seem alike. While all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange flowers, and curious odors, or work of the artist’s hands, or the face of one’s friend. Not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the

brilliance of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways, is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening. With this sense of the splendor of our experience and of its awful brevity, gathering all we are into one desperate effort to see and touch, we shall hardly have time to make theories about the things we see and touch. . . . We are all *condamnés*, as Victor Hugo says" (Victor Hugo again!) : "*les hommes sont tous condamnés à mort avec des sursis indéfinis* : we have an interval, and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest in art and song. For our one chance is in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time. High passions give one this quickened sense of life, ecstasy and sorrow of love, political or religious enthusiasm, or the 'enthusiasm of humanity.' Only be sure it is passion, that it does yield you this fruit of a quickened, multiplied consciousness. Of this wisdom the poetic passion, the desire of beauty, the love of art for art's sake, has most; for art comes to you professing frankly to give nothing but the highest quality to your moments as they pass, and simply for those moments' sake."

So ends the book. The last two chapters have little in common with the rest, beyond that of being within the same covers. The preceding essays form a separate part, of which the result is inconclusive and insubstantial; the theories of art are Winckelman's, the theories of life are Goethe's; but Mr. Pater has passed them through his own peculiar medium, and we are left with only the fine-spun sieve and a residuum of filmy impressions. Compared with the latter portion of the book, Mr. Ruskin's most incoherent utterances are worthy of respect, for he at least is always in earnest, and never talks of art with its high aspirations and profound convictions as a pastime, or of life with its solemn issues, its rapture and its anguish, as a play or a picture-gallery where the wise man lounges in cold-blooded dilettanteism, reckoning his emotions by clock and thermometer. These concluding chapters have at least this merit: they are definite and tangible as to what they attempt to express; it is for the reader to judge whether that be true, wholesome, even sensible, or false, foolish, and pernicious.

It is a relief to turn from threading this maze to follow M. Rio, who, although he sometimes chooses devious ways, always shows you whither he is tending. M. Rio may be called, by way of classification, the ultramontane critic. He is, in a certain sense, a man of one idea; the exaltation of the Roman Catholic Church is the one object of which he never loses sight; all others must be subordinated so as not to shut it out, all paths must be straightened or twisted to lead to it. His style is admirably suited for a serious undertaking: clear, simple, temperate, dignified, not without energy on occasion, and sometimes swelling into a solemn pomp of words. He is too deeply penetrated with the dignity of his subject ever to be amusing; he eschews gossip in a way which is tantalizing to a lighter-minded reader. On the other hand, he can, when he sees fit, tell an anecdote in a very touching and impressive manner, and has a remarkable gift of seizing upon striking, original figures, or crises, grouping about them subordinate personages and incidents in a way to produce a picturesque and dramatic effect; of gathering together the events of a period and so arranging them as to give relief and apparent predominance to one idea. In what a dignified and impressive attitude he shows us the Church through all her vicissitudes during those eventful centuries which witnessed the revival of classic letters; how she rises to the height of every situation, and towers above them all; how she meets her enemies even upon their own ground of profane knowledge, and annihilates them! The art which M. Rio displays in this mode of producing effects leads one to wonder whether a deep tinge of mediævalism which pervades his work be a quality of his mind or a requisite of his part. The chief cause for doubt is that in questions of taste and artistic opinion he proves himself to be so just, discriminating, and advanced, that one is fain to ask whether his judgment in other matters can really halt so far behind it in these, for his criticisms are not merely perceptive, the result of organization, but imply reflection, moderation, balance, and good sense. It may be that he uses this semblance of mediævalism, which is not in itself repulsive, to cloak other less amiable defects; he has no sympathy with liberty in any shape; none for progress; none even for human greatness

or suffering when not met in orthodox walks. The history of Siena, during the latter half of the fourteenth century, is a series of the most spirited and dauntless struggles on the part of her citizens to throw off the tyrannous rule of the nobility ; neither defeat nor the utmost devilishness of punishment could drive them to despair ; yet M. Rio ranges himself on the side of authority, save when authority itself rose against spiritual oppression ; even the Siennese artists of their brief republican days could not be good painters because they were patriots ; he speaks of them with reprobation and contempt because they painted civic and military standards, instead of banners for religious processions. He sneers at the martyr Huss as an illiterate fanatic who destroyed statues in his barbarous fury against image worship, although referring respectfully to Nicholas V.'s discouragement of both contemporary sculpture and the search for the antique, because to his Holiness they had a taint of idolatry. His tone is almost inquisitorial when telling the story of the classical academy which was persecuted with outrageous severity by Paul II. on charges of conspiracy and heresy, "being only cleared of the former," adds M. Rio, grimly. All this is evidently genuine, yet we cannot but doubt the sincerity of his lamentations over the destruction of the earnestly meant scrawls of early days to make way for the consummate productions of the sixteenth century, or that he really believes that the decadence of art began in spirit long previous to its culmination in point of fact. Indeed, sincerity is a quality of which the want is sadly felt throughout, sincerity and singleness of purpose ; for although he has evidently taken as his thesis the dependence of art upon religion, and developed it upon the assumption that there is no religion except that of papal dogma, art is his ostensible topic. This convergence of all his theories and views, this determination to bend or warp everything to one direction, forbids scope or variety in his mode of treating art or history ; it interferes with his fairness to individuals, his honesty about facts, and his candor as to works of art, to a degree which impairs the value of his opinions. There is, withal, such an expenditure of casuistry and sophistry by way of argument, such a turn for exegesis, such a magisterial and authoritative accent, such a

professional habit of improving the occasion, that, although we know M. Rio to be a layman, the husband of an English wife, and father of a family, the impression abides that our author wears a cassock and addresses us from the chair of theology in a Jesuit college. This is not the way to treat of art, albeit Christian art; and whatever the subject may gain by his *ex cathedra* manner, it loses by his lack of candor, and by his excursions into secular regions against the enemies of his church.

To his mediævalism, real or assumed, belongs the reverence with which M. Rio touches everything traditional; he alludes to the pictures of the Madonna ascribed to St. Luke, to the discovery of relics,—the inscription over the cross, the lance which pierced Christ's side, the Virgin's wedding-ring, and many more,—with imperturbable gravity. Perhaps an absence of humor may be part of the same temper of mind; not, as we have already said, that he would permit himself to be amusing, but we think he must be unconscious of the absurd side of some of his stories, or he would not tell them. His morals are mediæval too concerning pious frauds, and thefts proceeding from a devout desire to secure some sacred prize.

Having prepared our readers for M. Rio's peculiarities, we will try to do justice to his performance. He begins his long introduction by stating that in the respective religious systems of various nations there is one point which dominates all others and indicates the special vocation of each which has determined the direction of its moral and intellectual development, which was its heritage from the wreck of the primitive creed. The progress of each keeps pace with its fidelity to this central idea. With the Greeks it was that of man's double degradation, physical and moral; and it would seem as though this privileged race had chosen as its mission the rehabilitation of man spiritually and corporeally, and thus had given the world the notion of the ideal. M. Rio takes a rapid review of Grecian art for the sake of the parallels which he finds in it; where he cannot actually trace the original line, his faculty of taking for granted stands him in very good stead. He sees a mysterious coincidence between the miraculously begotten Minerva and the immaculately conceived Mary; be-

tween Apollo the Python-slayer and St. Michael with the dragon ; between the story of Orpheus and the history of our Saviour ; he even suggests very gently an occult relation between the fable of Hercules and the life of Christ. From Greece he passes to Rome, where there are more prototypes and parallels ; a prevision of the rule of the Benedictine order is found in the *Æneid*. M. Rio expatiates with pride and pleasure on the glory of ancient Rome, for to him she is but the antetype of the Rome of the papacy ; all roads lead thither ; she is the pivot of the earth, the centre and starting-point of Christendom, as the famous milestone in the forum was of the ancient world. In the days of Adrian, when the worship of the Roman people had died out, the true Roman people was to be found worshipping secretly in the catacombs. Here Christian art commences. Its beginnings are to be traced in the simple outlines of the crown, the cross, the palm-branch, the dove with the olive-leaf, the lamb, the good shepherd, of which we have heard until our enthusiasm has been overtaxed ; but the actual sight of one of those rude designs thrills us with a new emotion and we pore over them even on the walls of the Lateran Museum where hundreds have been collected, with the most intense interest, and grudge to pass over a single record of those unknown lives and deaths which seem all the higher and holier from their obscurity. M. Rio sees decadence in the very first step which Christian art made in coming above ground ; it loses its simplicity and renounces much of its symbolism. The subjects of the earliest paintings after Christianity found protectors instead of persecutors in the emperors, were chiefly drawn from the Apocalypse and typified the sufferings and rewards of believers. Mosaics followed ; in speaking of them he says, as he does elsewhere in other words of all early and perfectly earnest art, that they have a dignity and a depth of expression which neither correctness of form nor charm of color can supply, and which raise them above the domain of criticism.

M. Rio gives a succinct account of the successive steps of the Middle Ages, touching upon every salient point capable of a Romanistic interpretation. The separation of the Eastern and Western empires under Leo the Isaurian he represents as a

purely religious movement, the resistance of orthodox subjects to iconoclastic despotism; then came the universal dread of the end of the world at the approach of the year 1000; the institution of chivalry; the creation of the monastic orders; the crusades; the gradual formation of the legend (whose remarkable propensity to *grow*, M. Rio, with a gravity comical to uncatholic ears, compares to the mysterious development of the vegetable world or that of speech); the romances of the Round Table, with the story of the Saint Grail which marks the appearance of mysticism in mediæval literature; the foundation of the military orders; and thus we reach the year 1300 and its famous jubilee, with which the Middle Ages close. With them the introduction closes and the history begins.

M. Rio ascribes the reawakening of art to the great spiritual stirring of the thirteenth century, and therefore considers it independent of the influence of antiquity; he asserts that the first essays in a new style of architecture, with their magnificent and solemn results, were the birth of a fresh inspiration unconnected with any ancient origin. That this may be true of architecture we can believe, as it was far in advance of painting and sculpture; but before the other arts had half roused themselves from the torpor of a thousand years, the study of classic literature had absorbed the attention of the literary world, in fact had first created a literary world. M. Rio himself well marks the difference in the spirit of the two periods by the difference in the internal decoration of their churches; in the earlier ones the painters were so unconscious of themselves and preoccupied with their pious subjects that they did not waste a corner in the sanctuary on mere ornament; all the room was needed for the *dramatis personæ* of the sacred events or miraculous episodes they were depicting; not an inch was to be spared to accessories; what a contrast to the schools which came by and by to scrape off all this devout company and cover the space with the graceful and wanton luxuriance of their fancy in arabesques and chaplets, fabulous flowers and fictitious monsters! But with regard to his favorite theories we ought to let him speak without contradicting him at every word. "We must not forget the fortunate, but in no wise fortuitous, coincidence by which art revived in the

same century in which great saints and great poets were so deeply taken up each in their own way by the pursuit of the ideal. The character of its artistic productions was thus decided beforehand, not by conventional conformity, but because of the mysterious relation which has always existed between the art of a century and its predominating tendencies, whatever they may be." "In studying the history of art it is important to give full weight to its natural affinities with sanctity, heroism, and genius, that is to say, with the three sorts of greatness which rise above all others in the eyes of nations as in the eyes of wise men."

The jubilee of the year 1300 was certainly the inauguration of a new era, and M. Rio finds it a convenient point of departure for his most detailed and careful study of the Italian schools of art. He gives the priority to Siena, although it is commonly claimed for Florence; Giotto he calls the founder of the latter school, considering Cimabue as Byzantine. He places the Renaissance at the opening of the fifteenth century, and the word for him is the knell of Christian art; yet how slow its dissolution must have been is attested by the numerous volumes through which M. Rio is forced to follow it to the tomb. He discriminates, however, between the classic and pagan enthusiasm which form two distinct phases of the movement, a difference on which he insists from motives which afterwards appear. The chapters on the Siennese and Florentine schools are followed by two on the Renaissance and the Medicis, and two more on the Renaissance and the Papacy. The first make mention of all the artists, native or foreign, who worked in Florence during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and one of the most charming passages in the entire work is the account of Luca della Robbia and his successors; but the real object of the four is to show that the Medici were not patrons of art or letters; that the Popes were the true Mæcenas of the time. Naturally no good Catholic can look with a friendly eye on the family which gave Leo X. and Clement VII. to the chair of St. Peter, and M. Rio knows when to sacrifice a pope for the good of the Church. The chapters on Savonarola and his disciples, although they do not follow in immediate order, complete this series. Savonarola



may be reckoned as an influence on the art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for the sake of the many distinguished painters who were among his followers, although personally he was a far worse foe to painting and sculpture than poor Huss. M. Rio's account of him is the finest thing in the book ; our author is fully, nay unusually, capable of noble enthusiasm, and he is fervent in his admiration of this lofty, ardent spirit. Yet the drift of it all is to prove that the denunciations of the reformer were against the evil manners of his time alone, against the gross paganism into which the Renaissance had plunged, but by no means against the abuses of the hierarchy. M. Rio is aware that Savonarola does more credit to the Church than Alexander VI., and is willing to consider the former as a prophet and the latter as a castaway, but for that very reason the prophet must be held a zealous Catholic. And withal Alexander is exonerated from the odium of Savonarola's death, which is set down entirely to the hostility of Florentine money-changers and money-makers, who found that his preachings interfered with their profits. He fell victim to the enmity of the greedy Medici. However just the opprobrium with which M. Rio stigmatizes that family may be, he is not judicious in trying to deprive them of their reputation as munificent patrons of arts and letters. Their title cannot depend upon Vasari's inaccuracies alone, — negative proof at best ; if there were no other contemporary testimony in their favor, it would be puerile to deny their claims with the very stones of Florence telling their praises to this day. He makes a similar attempt with regard to the Estes of Ferrara, devoting two chapters to the task of proving that there was never any school of art, never any love of letters, nor learning, nor culture at their capital. He overreaches himself, for the answer is obvious ; why give two chapters to a place which produced nothing ? He gives a chronological table of the dynasty from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth, inclusive, followed by a catalogue of their crimes, and asks us whether such monsters could encourage anything good or beautiful. They were horrid wretches certainly, but unfortunately no worse than their neighbors, and the facts are all against him. No city of the same size is so stately with palaces and villas, all built by the

Este princes, as that now silent and grass-grown Ferrara. No capital was so much sought by great men, produced so many distinguished women,—it is enough to name Olimpia Morata and St. Catherine Vigri; Tasso's tragic story is no proof that genius was not honored at that court whose splendid patronage was made illustrious by so many great clients, Ariosto, Boiardo, Guarini, and a host more; the university ranked with any in Italy; a writer often quoted by M. Rio (Zanetti) places the painters of Ferrara at the head of the minor schools; the dukes caused the ancient Greek and Latin drama to be represented at their theatre at an immense cost; in times of scarcity they imported breadstuffs, which they distributed gratis to the people. By M. Rio's own showing, Ferrarese distinguished in every branch of art were scattered all over Italy during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; he calls them exiles, and says they were driven from home by want of encouragement, yet Ferrara still abounds in their works; and although he asserts that the artists of other states, beginning with Giotto, were called to the surrounding courts, but none was ever bidden to Ferrara, *every famous painter from Giotto to Titian*, inclusive, was entertained and employed there. We are lost in amazement at these falsifications, until their motive breaks upon us. From the earliest times down Ferrara was noted for her liberality in religious matters; in the thirteenth century the heresy of Armano Pungiluppo was tolerated by the reigning family and favored by the people until crushed by papal intervention; in the sixteenth, Clement Marot and Calvin found refuge and sympathy at the court. This explains everything.

The schools of Umbria,—to which M. Rio assigns the crown and palm of Italian art,—of Lombardy, Milan, Bergamo, Lodi, Cremona (these three not without a word of apology for giving them separate chapters), Venice, and Rome are examined in turn. There are special analyses of the genius and influence of Gian Bellini, Michael Angelo, Raphael, and even Leonardo da Vinci; the historian of Christian art cannot restrain his admiration for that supreme incarnation of the Renaissance. There is also a special notice of the Mystic school, at whose head stands the sweet and saintly

figure of Fra Angelico. M. Rio's way of looking at this phase of art contrasts curiously with Mr. Pater's; to be able to define the limits of such a subject one must be a thorough *connoisseur*, and something else besides; he disposes of adverse criticism in a single sentence which covers the whole question: "Religious painting, calling to its aid certain resources and tending towards a certain goal, becomes mystic painting, which implies *objectively* the highest form of the ideal, *subjectively* the sublimest flights of which the soul's faculties are capable. Once launched on this perilous path, the intuitions of the artist have something analogous to what is called, in the language of the saints, *the beatific vision*, and mere mechanical execution is nothing more to the art than the outer envelope to the blossom." In these various connections M. Rio shows great skill and plausibility in endeavoring to maintain his position that the Papacy has always been the friend of true enlightenment and culture, and for this it is that he lays so much stress on his distinction between classic and pagan antiquity. Nevertheless, we do not find this line respected for a moment by his two paragons, the eager and erudite Nicholas V. or the elegant and versatile scholar, Pius II., both of them men as eminent and attractive by their virtues as by their attainments, but who asked no questions for conscience' sake when following their favorite pursuits. Yet he marks the pontificate of Innocent VIII. (1484 to 1492), with the increasing ascendancy of the Medici in the college of cardinals, as the point when "the Renaissance entered upon its second phase, that is, from being servant it aspired to become mistress." And mistress it was in the sixteenth century when it attained its height, a dazzling and dizzy height, whence it fell and expired before the hundred years were fully sped.

The result of this survey, at once minute and comprehensive, is given in four stout octavo volumes, with two additional ones of Epilogue, which it is well that art students should know have nothing to do with the subject proper, being M. Rio's autobiography and his reminiscences of the La Ferronays family. We have not forgotten how frequently the old painters introduced their noble patrons prominently into their sacred pictures and put themselves humbly kneeling in a corner; but

even with this analogy in mind, there is an unpleasant flavor of flunkeyism in these supplementary volumes. M. Rio has taken as his epigraph the well-worn "*Ars longa vita brevis est*"; in treating his subject on such a scale, he apparently remembers only the first clause; still it is not easy to see how he could have abridged it consistently with his own plan. The constant recurrence of the same names and dates produces an occasional weariness; we feel as if we were moving to and fro in parallel lines without advancing; but this is due to the division into schools instead of periods; many of them overlap as to time, and we meet the same disciple laboring in divers vineyards; we seem to be treading the same ground when we are only following the same footsteps in pastures new. It is difficult, too, with a desire not to pass over a single name, to avoid falling into a mere enumeration of names now and then; there is great skill shown in escaping this, and contriving to connect some point of interest, some ray of individuality, with the most obscure. But M. Rio, being as we have said a man of one idea, produces a monotony in his views and sentiments which in the end cannot fail to be wearisome. Moreover, in taking for the subject of his book "*Christian Art*," he should have confined himself to the strict limits of his subject and have ended with the date which he fixes for the decline of art, the moment when the spirit of the Renaissance got the upper hand of religious sentiment; having departed from this, he is forced into drawing distinctions between the moral and æsthetic value of various productions in a way calculated to mislead the general reader as to their absolute merit. We feel at last that we are hearing but one side, and close the book in a dissatisfied frame of mind.

M. Burckhardt surveys the great pageant of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, not in its artistic, but in its historic, social, moral, and intellectual aspects. Some familiarity with these is necessary to make the art of the period intelligible, and in his pages we learn to understand the manifold influences which wrought upon the genius of the time, the patronage, the hostility, the stimulus, the drawbacks, the inspiration, the humors, the aims, which controlled its career. We learn to know the men and women who look out at us from the can-

vases, who rest beneath the sculptured tombs, whose piety or whose pride raised the churches, whose love of learning gathered the libraries, whose love of art formed the galleries and museums, for whose delight the palaces and villas and gardens saw the day. We watch the growth of the Renaissance ; we see the hands that built it, the extraordinary variety of material which went to form the wondrous edifice, the noble, lavish, splendid life that was lived within it, the blood and pollution and ruin into which it fell. It is presented to us first from a political point of view, the state as a work of art. The close of the long conflict between the Papacy and the Hohenstaufens left Italy shattered to pieces ; her unity as a country was gone ; with the supremacy of the emperor she lost her head, her suzerain, and every king, duke, marquis, count, and little feudal lord asserted his own independence by violence, treachery, and cruelty ; famous free-lances snatched sovereignties and founded families for themselves ; in the barbarous immorality of the times illegitimacy was no bar to the succession ; petty principalities were swallowed up by more powerful ones ; dynasties expired through internecine hate ; republics, too, arose no less tyrannous and perfidious in their sway. Yet out of this chaos there gradually struggled, feeble and formless at first, but gathering shape and strength with its growth, the notion of modern statesmanship. By degrees, alike in despotisms and republics, the thought became definite that there were better and safer terms of existence than perpetual warfare with one's neighbors or fellow-citizens. Despotism continued to be the common form of government, becoming in the hands of some of the small autocrats almost patriarchal, while others seem to have overstepped the boundary between madmen and monsters. But as time goes on the madmen and monsters become fewer and give place to men sometimes not less wicked but more civilized in their crime, sometimes to such chivalrous and princely figures as Federigo di Montefeltro and Francesco Sforza. Notions of political economy, finance, foreign relations, of national dignity and aggrandizement, were gradually developed ; even war was studied as an art in the interest of humanity ; the atrocities which marked Italian warfare in the sixteenth century were introduced by foreign mercenaries

or invading armies, chiefly by the Spaniards. The thought of Italian unity, or a federation of the Italian powers, perpetually recurs in one form or another; Dante, Petrarch, Savonarola, Machiavelli, — who elaborated the theory of the state to a masterpiece, — each contemplated it from his own plane; it assumed an alarming form in the projects of the Medici, with Leo X. for Pope, to make Giuliano king of Southern and Lorenzo of Central and Upper Italy. The Papacy as a government was behind the other states in these ideas, and backward in all improvements; after the severe lessons of the Avignonese exile and the great schism of the Church, which should have been so salutary, nepotism, simony, the sale of indulgences, and all the abuses which led to the Reformation, were gaining ground again, and these were vices of administration as much as moral iniquities. So oppressively was the Church as a body politic felt to be a bar to progress, that the suggestion of the secularization of her states was familiar to the fifteenth century; it was so general that Cæsar Borgia thought of turning it to his own account by seizing on the temporal power on the death of his father, Alexander VI. In the opinion of Burckhardt, as of many living Italian statesmen, the Reformation alone prevented the fall of the temporal power three hundred years ago. In the latter half of the sixteenth century the leading churchmen saw the vital necessity of a vigorous effort; a counter-reformation was started with a stern reform in the morals of the priesthood, especially in high places; new monastic orders were instituted; nepotism was tolerated only as a means of placing in positions of secular influence those who could be reckoned upon to support the Papacy; a close alliance was contracted with the Catholic powers whose piety received an impulse from the dangers which assailed the Holy See; and a number of energetic and single-minded popes, like the fanatical Caraffa, Paul IV., and the resolute and able Sixtus V., aided by circumstances, succeeded in arresting their portion of the world on its onward way. Successive inundations of invasion checked the growth of national sentiment and development in the rest of Italy, so that the art of statecraft shared the fate of letters and the fine arts.

The existence of these numerous states, republics or despot-

isms, gave opportunities for individual development such as no modern government affords. Whether a Visconti was training his dogs to devour his subjects, or an Este was regulating the taxes, or a Montefeltro was keeping open table at which he and his guests were entertained by the reading of some devout book or heroic poem, each was exercising unchecked his natural propensities, while his court offered a field for private distinction of every sort. Isolated and sharply defined individualities appear early in Italian history; the times of Barbarossa and Gregory VII. called them forth, as eventful epochs seldom fail to do, but chiefly in conspicuous positions. Later on, the growing importance of various courts and the general diffusion of culture produced in private life men and women of the most marked originality, who turned their five talents to ten, or their ten to a thousand, with no motive beyond that of perfecting their own personality. Even the evils of the time taught people to rely upon their own resources, and kept their faculties, like their weapons, always sharp and ready for use. As new tastes, new interests, new industries were introduced, the intellectual and æsthetic development of many became almost prodigious; their culture was not many-sided, but orb-like, universal, embracing acquirements which might be deemed incompatible from their nature and impossible from their number. The chapter which Burckhardt devotes to the phenomena of this sudden expansion is of the liveliest interest; all the tendencies and influences which produced the composite and cosmopolite character in which it reached its acme are examined; love of fame, — of what is termed immortality, — which begot the desire for splendid sepulchres; aristocratic proclivities; luxury; love of art; the strange combination of enthusiasm and mockery in the spirit of the age; enjoyment of wit, satire, even buffoonery; a sense of heroism and dignity; keen curiosity. Men cultivated universality as a single form of genius is cultivated now, and we can still see the traces of the fine finish they sought to put upon life and themselves. Our author thinks that under so many stimulating and favorable conditions Italy would have bloomed and ripened abundantly without the impulse given by the rediscovery of antiquity; that by so many new avenues the human intellect must have

reached some memorable height in its course. M. Rio, as we have seen, is convinced of this; what paramount thought would have given the stamp to the ardent and opulent genius of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, had the Renaissance never been, is an alluring sphere for speculation, but one with which we have nothing to do. Isolated and infrequent students of classic learning are to be found in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but it was not until the fourteenth that the growing thirst for knowledge turned towards long-deserted fountains, nor until the fifteenth that the whole mind of Italy was saturated in them. Human intelligence, newly awakened, emerging from the fogs of the Middle Ages, found classic antiquity waiting like a guide, and followed her chart with its precise and positive indications. Towards the close of the fourteenth century Fazio degli Uberti wrote his *Dittamondo*, an account of an imaginary journey to real places; he visits one town in honor of its patron saint, another for the sake of some local legend of the Madonna; he reaches the Eternal City, and hallowed memories throng around him from every quarter, but from their midst advances a majestic beldame in queenly tatters, tells him the glorious story of her youth, leads him to a spot whence he can command the seven hills and their world of ruins, and says, "I am Rome; know by these how beautiful I was!"

The wholesale destruction of classic monuments by using ancient buildings as stone quarries, and, what was far worse, burning sculptured marble to procure lime, was in full force as late as the middle of the fifteenth century, when the increasing sense of the beautiful and reverence for antiquity put a stop to it. The ruins were made a subject of study, not for their architectural merit alone, but for any scrap of inscription they might reveal; archæology made its appearance, excavations were begun with the fond hope that men would find their long-buried love, not dead, but sleeping, beneath the fragments of a thousand years. The palimpsest MSS. of monkish authors were searchingly interrogated for the classic secrets they concealed. Oratory, especially funeral discourses, came into fashion again; and in literature the epigram, so well adapted to the concise and caustic Italian wits. The taste for Grecian



letters had been revived by Manuel Chrysoloras, a Greek political emissary to Florence, whose specialty had the rare good fortune to chime with the humor of the hour. He lectured in Florence for several years on the language and literature of his native country, and excited almost a fanaticism for the study of Greek; he was succeeded by many lettered refugees, who commanded position and emolument as commentators and transcribers. The ambition of every man of education was to possess copies of the ancient authors, and a host of copyists were soon at work; calligraphy was at its highest premium; the exquisite illumination of missals gave way entirely to the art of engrossing fair Greek and Roman characters. Printing suddenly appeared in answer to the urgent demand, despised at first by bibliophiles; but prejudice soon gave way before the practical advantages of the invention. Although utility triumphed in this particular, the worship of beauty had got possession of men's souls through the wide-spread study of the antique. The literary academies which sprang up on every side for the cultivation of classic lore held their meetings in dark green gardens, where, through the shadows of cypress and myrtle, gleamed the white forms of ancient statues and the elegant outline of the *loggia*, erected in memory of the porch of the philosophic schools. Victors were complimented by triumphal processions; poets were solemnly crowned with laurel; children were called by classic names, and men took a Latin or Atticized form of their own, or even changed it altogether. There was incessant emulation among the rich and noble to prove themselves the most accomplished scholars, the most munificent patrons; indeed, in public men it became essential to their popularity; sovereign princes everywhere set the example; the two Popes of the fifteenth century who were best as men were foremost among the humanists; Martin V., the humble and enthusiastic student, when near his end, thanked God for having given him the love of letters; Pius II. pointed with pride to his name, Æneas Sylvius, as proof of his classic lineage; even Paul II., the Venetian Barbo, the persecutor of the Platonists, claimed descent from Ænobarbus.

The love of travel, of distant journeys and voyages of dis-

covery, was kindled by acquaintance with those wonderful ancients who had been explorers too. This struck the spark in the breasts of men whose creative energies could not expend themselves in fashioning a calm and contemplative existence after the classic ideals, and drove them abroad into the outer world. Columbus and Vespucci sailed forth to seek another hemisphere. The terrestrial universe became an object of intense curiosity, which kept pace, perhaps, with an increasing earthiness, a mundane and finite way of looking at things. Geography, astronomy, botany, natural history, and kindred sciences were caught up in this omnivorous greed of hungerers and thirsters for knowledge. Philology was the corollary of Greek, Latin, and Arabic studies; ethnology followed in sure sequence. But the subjective side of life had been revealed to the minds of men, and besides the investigation of the earth's surface and properties, her varied aspects began to make their impression. Pius II., the most amiable and sympathetic physiognomy that looks forth from the dazzle of that day, loved Nature as we love her now, and described her as those do who love; he saw the flower of the flax, the shadow of the rock, the undulation of the grain-fields, and heard the ripple of the wave and the song of the thrush. Leon Battista Alberti's eyes and ears had been opened by the magic touch which does not illuminate all alike. Smiling or frowning backgrounds of natural scenery, rejoicing or mysterious, appear in the pictures of the great masters. And this new attention to Nature was but the next step to a deeper insight into humanity; biographies, autobiographies, and memoirs were written, attesting the interest with which men were considering themselves and others as conscious, sentient beings; analysis and introspection had begun.

The foregoing summary of the complex creative and motive forces of the era, and the innumerable forms of intellectual activity which they brought forth, is a faint repetition of an often-told tale. But with M. Burckhardt we seem to stand on a lofty tower of past days, and our glance ranges round a magnificent horizon; countless new points of interest and importance become visible; we see the natural juxtaposition and proportion of things which have hitherto been magnified,

dwarfed, distorted, or altogether overlooked; we discern the heights where the beacons were kindled; we behold the panorama of the Renaissance with our eyes of the present, but, in its native colors, in the light of its own day and the atmosphere of its age. Then he unroofs for us the life of the times, and shows us the guests crowned with roses reclining at the symposium; conspirators whetting their daggers and firing their souls by the example of Aristogiton and Brutus; academicians raising altars to Romulus; humanists in their libraries, with lamp alight before the bust of Plato, poring over ancient treatises of philosophy; poisoners mixing their drugs; young daughters of noble houses studying side by side with their brothers all that learning incarnate could impart; alchemists, half credulous, half impostors, with crucibles and horoscopes and magic mirrors, dabbling in occult sciences; ladies tinting their hair golden and painting their cheeks and eyelids; beautiful and erudite princesses holding an easy state amid a throng of poets, painters, and scholars; Aspasia no less beautiful and accomplished surrounded by a court of princes and prelates. We see Astor Baglione in glittering armor swoop down single-handed on a crowd of insurgents before the cathedral of Perugia, leaving perhaps an indelible vision on the memory of the child Raphael to be transmitted to latest posterity as St. Michael driving forth Heliodorus; we see the heroic Catherine Sforza defying Cæsar Borgia and his troops from the battlements of her little capital of Forlì; the gentle Pius II. holding audience of a summer's day under the chestnuts and ilexes of Monte Anciotà; the adventurous Benvenuto Cellini at his nocturnal incantation in the ruins of the Coliseum. We see how a pursuit became a passion, the passion a mania, the mania a folly, an affectation, and a crime. How the life moulded to a conscious imitation of a classic ideal fell from platonism to epicureanism and at last to mere wallowing.

M. Burckhardt thinks that the great service of the Renaissance was its opening a vast arena outside of the Church for independent thought and individual development. He finds an obvious cause of deterioration in the indiscriminating enthusiasm for antiquity which drew no distinction between the

virtues and foibles or vices of its heroes. He makes imagination responsible for a great share in the characteristics of the Italians both good and bad, and this is a new view of them, as their sensuousness and its worst results, their materialism in religion especially, is generally ascribed to want of imagination; yet it is plain, on a little reflection, that great religious revivals such as those under St. Francis, St. Benedict, and Savonarola, were due to the excitable fancy of the masses on whom they wrought; this is finely illustrated by a contrast between the slow and silent influence of the *Imitatio Christi*, a Northern work, on the Northern mind, and the effect of the preaching of St. Bernardino of Siena and St. John Capistran on the Southern temperament. This same tendency had its dark side in monstrous forms of hate, revenge, and even love, which only an overwrought imagination could keep alive; in superstition (in which these people were veritable pagans even in the sixteenth century, with their belief in omens, witchcraft, ghosts, familiars, demons), which was a constant temptation to the grossest imposture. The study of the platonists led probably to that of the neo-platonists, and the writers on magic. A few voices were raised against it, among which was that of Pico della Mirandola, yet he was not free from a belief in the supernatural. All this superstition, which was very materialistic, begot doubts of a future life, — as extremes meet in their results, — which were fostered by antipathy to the Church and her teachings. With this came irresponsibility. Nevertheless Burckhardt believes that there was a strong substratum of real religion in the mind of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, or men could not have withstood the force of external conditions and the tremendous power of their own individuality, and Christianity and accountability must have wholly perished in Southern Europe. He is of opinion that if the intellectual impetus of the Renaissance had been allowed to run its rightful course, it would have overcome the debasing tendencies which beset it, but the influence of certain prominent persons, foreign conquest, and the Counter Reformation checked its career and drove it down instead of upward. He is very guarded, however, in his generalizations and deductions, and with consistent modesty dwells on the difficulty of making due

allowance for nationality, race, century, circumstance, and all the other elements which have to be taken into account.

The wonder of his work is, how justly he seems to have weighed and measured all these considerations; that so comprehensive a view should have been taken of any country by a foreigner; that so deep an insight, so broad a sympathy, should exist for a past epoch in a man of a different time; that questions, involving issues so delicate, complex, and adverse, should be treated without prejudice or partisanship; that his enthusiasm should never mislead him, nor his keenness turn to cynicism. His style is easy, simple, and pleasant; he has the solidity and thoroughness of his countrymen, the acumen and picturesqueness of a Frenchman, the clearness and humor of an Englishman. Of the absorbing interest, the captivating charm of the main topic, as it appears in these pages, no review or abstract can give the feeblest notion; we linger over them even when we have reached the last, and leave them with full acquiescence in the author's assertion that the Renaissance on the whole produced a symmetry in the development of individual man, and a harmony between him and the conceptions of a new and glorious art, which ennobled life as neither antiquity nor mediævalism had or ever could have done.

SARAH B. WISTER.

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## ART. VI.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen.* Von DR. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, Ordentl. Professor der classischen Philologie an der Universität Basel. Zweites Stück: *Vom Nutzen und Nachtheil der Historie für das Leben.* Leipzig: Verlag von E. W. Fritsch. 1874.

IN this the second volume of his *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, Dr. Nietzsche shows a very warm feeling against some of the hobbies of the present day; and while it is the unwise study of history that more especially excites his wrath, he takes occasion to denounce a great deal of the shallowness of modern culture. Certainly he makes